

Isaiah 40:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in:

Analysis

God's transcendent perspective is vividly portrayed: He sits above the earth's circle ('chug'), viewing inhabitants as grasshoppers. The heavens are stretched like a curtain ('doq'—thin fabric) or tent ('ohel'), emphasizing creation's ease for God. This cosmic imagery establishes God's absolute sovereignty and humans' relative insignificance.

Historical Context

The 'circle of the earth' reflects ancient cosmology while emphasizing God's transcendence over all creation. For exiles feeling small and powerless, this reminded them that God's perspective infinitely exceeds human limitations.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does viewing yourself from God's cosmic perspective humble your self-importance?
2. What does it mean that the Creator of the universe is personally concerned with your life?

Interlinear Text

לְשִׁבְתָּה:	עַל	חַגָּה	בָּאָרֶץ	לְשִׁבְתָּה:
It is he that sitteth	H5921	upon the circle	of the earth	It is he that sitteth
	H3427		H776	H3427
כַּחֲגַב יְמִ		הַנּוֹתֵן הַ	כְּדִקְ	שְׁמִים יְמִ
thereof are as grasshoppers	H2284	that stretcheth out	as a curtain	the heavens
		H5186	H1852	H8064
וּמְתַמֵּן מִ		כָּאָהָל		לְשִׁבְתָּה:
and spreadeth them out	H4969	as a tent	It is he that sitteth	
		H168	H3427	

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 104:2 (Parallel theme): Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain:

Isaiah 42:5 (Parallel theme): Thus saith God the LORD, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein:

Isaiah 66:1 (Parallel theme): Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?

Proverbs 8:27 (Parallel theme): When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth:

Jeremiah 10:12 (Parallel theme): He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion.

Isaiah 40:17 (Parallel theme): All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity.

Psalms 68:33 (Parallel theme): To him that rideth upon the heavens of heavens, which were of old; lo, he doth send out his voice, and that a mighty voice.

Job 9:8 (Parallel theme): Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea.

Job 22:14 (Parallel theme): Thick clouds are a covering to him, that he seeth not; and he walketh in the circuit of heaven.

Isaiah 51:13 (Parallel theme): And forgettest the LORD thy maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth; and hast feared continually every day because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy? and where is the fury of the oppressor?